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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0682
INFO AMCONSUL ZAGREB IMMEDIATE
CSCE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BELGRADE 06831

DEPARTMENT FOR EAGLEBURGER, KIMMITT AND ZOELICK
WHITE HOUSE FOR SCOWCROFT AND GOMPERT
BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEC - AMBASSADOR NILES
FROM WARREN ZIMMERMANN
E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, YO
SUBJ: JOSEPHINE BAKER WAS RIGHT ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA

REVIEW AUTHORITY: Theodore Sellin,
Senior Reviewer

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
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2. AT THIS WRITING, THE YUGOSLAV CRISIS IN ITS CURRENT
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AND MOST DANGEROUS PHASE BURNS IN THE AIR LIKE A
LIGHTED MATCH WAITING FOR SOME VOLATILE SUBSTANCE TO
CONSUME. NOBODY CAN TELL WHETHER THE MATCH WILL, AS
SO MANY TIMES BEFORE, GUTTER OUT, OR WHETHER THIS TIME
A CONFLAGRATION WILL START. SEVERAL THINGS ARE
CLEAR, HOWEVER, AND THEY HAVE POLICY IMPLICATIONS.

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3. THE FIRST THING IS THAT SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC AND NOBODY
ELSE STARTED THIS CRISIS, AND HE, ALONG WITH HIS ALLY

JOVIC, IS PUSHING IT TO DANGEROUS EXTREMES. HE HAS ALREADY GONE BEYOND THE OSTENSIBLE SERBIAN REASON FOR BLOCKING THE CROAT MESIC'S ASSUMPTION OF THE PRESIDENCY: THE SEATING OF THE MONTENEGRO, VOJVODINA, AND KOSOVO PRESIDENCY MEMBERS. THEY HAVE NOW BEEN SEATED THANKS TO MILOSEVIC'S BLACKMAIL- HIS MOVE AGAINST MESIC PROBABLY STEMS FROM HIS DESIRE TO DRIVE THE SLOVENES OUT OF YUGOSLAVIA, HIS EFFORTS TO DESTROY PRIME MINISTER MARKOVIC, HIS HOPES OF COVERING UP SERBIA'S ECONOMIC DISASTER, AND HIS OVERALL PLANS FOR DESTROYING YUGOSLAVIA IN THE INTEREST OF A GREATER SERBIA- IF WE LOOK BACK ON MILOSEVIC'S TWISTS AND TURNS OVER THE LAST YEAR AND A HALF, ONE POINT STANDS OUT: HE HAS CONSISTENTLY WORKED AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF YUGOSLAV UNITY AS WELL AS DEMOCRACY. HE LAUNCHED A UNILATERAL AND ILLEGAL ECONOMIC BOYCOTT AGAINST SLOVENIA AND CROATIA; HE STOLE \$1.8 BILLION FROM THE COMMON FUNDS OF THE NATIONAL BANK OF YUGOSLAVIA; HE HAS TRIED TWICE (IN MARCH AND NOW) TO DESTROY THE FEDERAL PRESIDENCY; AND HE HAS WAGED A MOUNTING

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CAMPAIGN AGAINST FEDERAL PRIME MINISTER MARKOVIC,
CULMINATING LAST WEEK IN A CALL IN THE FEDERAL
ASSEMBLY FOR A VOTE OF NO-CONFIDENCE. IN CONTRAST,
THE SLOVENE MOVES AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF YUGOSLAVIA
PALE BY COMPARISON. YET MILOSEVIC AND JOVIC HAVE THE
GALL TO CHALLENGE MESIC ON THE SPURIOUS GROUNDS THAT
HE IS ANTI-YUGOSLAV.

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4. WHATEVER ELSE MILOSEVIC IS, HE'S NO FOOL. IN HIS
TACTICS AGAINST CROATIAN PRESIDENT TUDJMAN, HE HAS
WON EVERY TIME, HIS NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUES (A
COMBINATION OF CHARM AND DUPLICITY) LEAVING THE SLOWER-
FOOTED TUDJMAN GASPING FOR BREATH. IN THEIR TWO BILATERAL
ENCOUNTERS MILOSEVIC LURED TUDJMAN INTO A DISCUSSION
ABOUT CHANGING BOSNIA'S BORDERS - THAN WHICH NOTHING
COULD BE MORE THREATENING TO PEACE. THE MILOSEVIC I
HAVE SEEN TWICE IN THE LAST TEN DAYS IS SWOLLEN WITH
SUCCESS. HE IS PUMPED UP BY THIS CRISIS HE HAS
CREATED - FULL OF SELF-SATISFACTION, GRANDIOSITY, AND
THE SCHADENFREUDE THAT HAS COME FROM CAUSING OTHERS
DIFFICULTY, TENSION, AND PAIN. I HAVE A GROWING FEELING
THAT WE MAY BE DEALING WITH A MADMAN. IF SO, THEN HE

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5. MESIC'S PERSONALITY JUSTIFIES IN NO WAY MILOSEVIC'S
AND JOVIC'S MOVE AGAINST HIM- MESIC IS THE BEST CROAT
ANY REASONABLE SERB COULD WANT. HE HAS A SERBIAN
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WIFE; SEVEN MEMBERS OF HIS FAMILY WERE KILLED BY THE
CROATIAN USTASHI DURING THE WAR (A CLAIM MILOSEVIC
AND JOVIC CANNOT MAKE); HE HAS TOLD ME SEVERAL TIMES
THAT HE WANTS CROATIA TO STAY IN YUGOSLAVIA; AND HE IS
KNOWN AS A MODERATE AND A PROBLEM SOLVER. IN FACT
WHEN THIS CRISIS HIT, HE WAS UNDER ATTACK IN HIS OWN
REPUBLIC FOR GIVING AWAY TOO MUCH TO THE SERBS IN THE
MAY 9 AGREEMENT DEALING WITH THE UNREST IN CROATIA.
FOR MILOSEVIC, MESIC IS THE FUNCTIONAL EQUIVALENT OF
THE KOSOVO LEADER RUGOVA; MILOSEVIC ATTACKS THEM
BOTH BECAUSE OF THEIR MODERATION, NOT IN SPITE OF IT.
MILOSEVIC LIKES TO POLARIZE, AND THEREFORE PREFERS
EXTREMISTS AS ADVERSARIES.

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6. WHERE DO THE VARIOUS PLAYERS LINE UP?

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-- NOBODY KNOWS HOW FAR MILOSEVIC IS PERPARED TO PUSH
THIS TOTALLY AVOIDABLE CRISIS. HE MAY ALREADY HAVE
OVER-REACHED (WHICH DOESN'T MEAN HE WON'T PRESS FURTHER),
BUT IT WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO BE THE INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY WHICH DRIVES THIS HOME. THE SERBIAN OPPOSITION
ISN'T UP TO IT.

-- THE SLOVENES, ALWAYS A WILD CARD, MIGHT DO JUST WHAT
MILOSEVIC WANTS: LAUNCH AN IMMEDIATE UNILATERAL BID
FOR INDEPENDENCE. NOBODY CAN BLAME THE SLOVENES FOR
NOT WANTING TO BE IN A CLUB THAT HAS SERBS AND CROATS
FOR MEMBERS. BUT THEIR PRECIPITATE ACTION WOULD SHIFT
THE FOCUS FROM MILOSEVIC AND UNWITTINGLY SUPPORT HIS
POWER PLAY. SLOVENE PRESIDENT KUCAN UNDERSTANDS THIS.

-- THE CROATS, WISELY, SEEM TO HAVE DECIDED TO PLAY
IT COOL FOR NOW, HOPING THAT THIS TIME MILOSEVIC WILL
SELF-DESTRUCT. BUT TUDJMAN IS INCREASINGLY UNDER
PRESSURE FROM HIS OWN EXTREMISTS, WHO THEMSELVES
HAVE LITTLE COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES: THEY'RE

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-- THE ARMY CANNOT HAVE WELCOMED MILOSEVIC'S AND JOVIC'S
MOVE AGAINST MESIC, SINCE IT FORCES UNWELCOME CHOICES
ON THE JNA LEADERSHIP AND UNDERMINES THE UNITY OF
YUGOSLAVIA. CHIEF OF STAFF ADZIC, A HARD-LINER,
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ACTUALLY PARTICIPATED IN EFFORTS TO FIND A COMPROMISE
OVER MESIC. THE ARMY HAS A PRESIDENTIAL MANDATE TO
DISARM IRREGULARS IN CROATIA AND LESS THAN THREE WEEKS
LEFT TO DO THIS; WE CAN EXPECT IT TO START SOON.
THE TESTS WILL BE WHETHER THE JNA IS IMPARTIAL TO BOTH
THE SERB AND CROAT SIDES AND WHETHER IT CONTINUES TO
RECOGNIZE CIVILIAN CONTROL EVEN IN CONDITIONS OF A
PARALYZED PRESIDENCE- THIS COULD BE ANOTHER CRISIS
POINT.

-- FINALLY, PRIME MINISTER MARKOVIC HAS PUT HIMSELF IN
MOTION TO RESTORE THE MESIC PRESIDENCY OR, FAILING THAT,
TO EFFECTIVELY SUBSTITUTE FOR IT. APART FROM THE JNA,
MARKOVIC'S GOVERNMENT IS THE ONLY EXECUTIVE BRANCH
INSTITUTION LEFT IN YUGOSLAVIA. BY TRYING TO SHOW
THAT FEDERAL YUGOSLAVIA CAN STILL OPERATE DESPITE
MILOSEVIC'S ATTACKS ON IT, MARKOVIC IS NOW THE THE ONLY
MAJOR FIGURE IN THE COUNTRY WHO IS ACTIVELY CHALLENGING
MILOSEVIC. MARKOVIC IS PLAYING A WEAK HAND. HE IS
BACKED BY BOSNIA AND MACEDONIA AND CLAIMS THE SUPPORT
OF THE JNA AND CROATIA; WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT. MILOSEVIC
WILL SPARE NO EFFORT TO DESTROY MARKOVIC AND THE SLOVENES
ARE TOO SELF-ABSORBED TO CARE. BLOODY VIOLENCE LIES
BEYOND MARKOVIC'S FAILURE, SO IT'S OF CRITICAL
IMPORTANCE THAT HE SUCCEED.

-
7. ANOTHER CURRENT FACTOR, UNFORTUNATELY A NEGATIVE
ONE, ARE THE COMPETITIVE REFERENDA IN THE SERBIAN
AND CROATIAN PARTS OF CROATIA. IF ROBERT LA FOLLETTE
COULD VISIT MODERN YUGOSLAVIA, EVEN HE WOULD ADMIT THAT
REFERENDA HERE ARE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. BEGINNING
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WITH THE SLOVENIAN REFERENDUM LAST DECEMBER, THE
QUESTIONS ARE ALWAYS FRAMED IN A "ARE YOU A PATRIOT OR
A TRAITOR?" FORM. USUALLY THE VOTING CONDITIONS ARE
SO SLOPPY AS TO NEGATE FAIR REGISTRATION, FREE CHOICE
AND SECRET VOTING. AND THE RESULTS CONTRIBUTE TO
FURTHER POLARIZATION RATHER THAN TO UNDERSTANDING AND
CONCILIATION. THE REFERENDA IN CROATIA OF THE LAST TWO
SUNDAYS HAVE ALL THESE DEFECTS. THE CROATS VOTED ONE
PREDICTABLE WAY, THE SERBS ANOTHER (OR BOYCOTTED) ;
NOTHING WAS RESOLVED.

-
8. WHAT CAN THE U.S. DO IN THESE COMPLEX AND DANGEROUS
CIRCUMSTANCES? GIVEN THE PACE OF EVENTS, WE WILL
HAVE TO BE ABLE TO REACT WITH BOTH SPEED AND

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 04 BELGRADE 06831

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CONSISTENCY. UNFORTUNATELY, THE NICKLES-BENTLEY
AMENDMENT SERIOUSLY LIMITS OUR FLEXIBILITY. THIS
IS WHAT I PROPOSE FOR NOW:

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-- WE SHOULD SUPPORT MARKOVIC'S EFFORTS TO THE
EXTENT WE CAN. WE'RE ALREADY DOING THIS AND
HE'S GRATEFUL. NICKLES-BENTLEY PRESENTS A MAJOR
PROBLEM HERE. WE SHOULD ALSO MAKE CLEAR THAT WE
CANNOT HAVE A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP WITH YUGOSLAVIA
UNTIL MESIC IS SEATED. UNTIL THEN, I DON'T THINK
WE SHOULD "RECOGNIZE" MESIC AS PRESIDENT; THE
LEGALITIES ARE TOO BLURRED; RATHER OUR EFFORTS SHOULD
CONCENTRATE ON PRESSURING MILOSEVIC AND JOVIC TO
CAVE.

-
-- WITH MESIC STILL HANGING FIRE, THE SECRETARY
SHOULD NOT CERTIFY ON NICKLES-BENTLEY. WE SHOULD
RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF SANCTIONS
WILL HAVE A CUMULATIVELY DAMAGING EFFECT ON MARKOVIC
AND DEMOCRATIC REFORM, THEREBY HELPING MILOSEVIC.
IN THE INTEREST OF OUR SUPPORT FOR MARKOVIC, WE
SHOULD HANDLE THE AID DRAWDOWN IN A WAY THAT PINS
ALL THE BLAME ON MILOSEVIC'S ACTIONS. NICKLES-
BENTLEY WAS ALL OVER THE YUGOSLAV PRESS THIS
WEEKEND, WITH PRACTICALLY NO REFERENCE TO MILOSEVIC'S
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS; WE NEED A PRESS STATEMENT ASAP
PINNING THE BLAME ON MILOSEVIC. WE SHOULD ALSO MAKE
EVERY EFFORT TO EXEMPT FROM SANCTIONS PROGRAMS THAT
FIT NICKLES-BENTLEY OBJECTIVES. FOR EXAMPLE, PRIVA-
TIZATION AND IMET SHOULD QUALIFY AS ASSISTING
DEMOCRATIZATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS. THE SANCTION
THAT MARKOVIC FEARS MOST IS ON IMF-IBRD AND THE
PARIS CLUB. BEFORE WE MOVE ON THAT (HOPEFULLY WE

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-- THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO HIT THE ARMY WITH
EVERYTHING WE'VE GOT. I BELIEVE THAT THE ARMY
IS NOT IN MILOSEVIC'S POCKET, PARTICULARLY NOW
THAT HE IS CLEARLY TRYING TO DESTROY YUGOSLAV
UNITY. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER MAKSIC, A SERB,
TOLD US THIS MORNING THAT THE ARMY DEFINITELY
WANTED (AND WANTS) MESIC CONFIRMED. MARKOVIC NEEDS JNA
SUPPORT AND OUR PROGRAMS GIVE US SOME LEVERAGE IN
KEEPING THE JNA ON THE CIVILIAN-CONTROL RESERVATION.
IF WE HAVE TO STOP IMET (I HOPE WE DON'T), WE SHOULD
EXPLAIN IT AS PART OF AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD CONGRESSIONAL
REQUIREMENT. I THINK WE SHOULD POSTPONE (BUT NOT
CANCEL) THE JOINT MILITARY COMMAND VISIT SCHEDULED
FOR EARLY JUNE. WE CAN CITE THE UNSTABLE SECURITY
AND POLITICAL SITUATION AND SAY THAT MESIC'S INVESTITURE
AND GOOD RESULTS ON THE GROUND IN CROATIA WOULD MAKE
IT EASIER FOR US TO RESCHEDULE; THAT USES OUR LEVERAGE
TO ESTABLISH AN INCENTIVE. AT THIS STAGE, I WOULD HOLD
OFF ON ANY OVERALL ACTION OR STATEMENT AGAINST ARMS
SALES.

-
-- THIS IS THE RIGHT TIME FOR THE U.S. AND EUROPE
TO HIT HARD AGAINST MILOSEVIC TO TRY TO SEPARATE
HIM FROM HIS DOMESTIC SUPPORT. HIS ACTIONS HAVE
THE CLEAR EFFECT OF BREAKING UP YUGOSLAVIA; HE'S
THE MAIN SEPARATIST AND WE SHOULD SAY SO. PRIVATELY,
WE SHOULD LET HIM KNOW THAT THE SUSPENSION OF OPIC
GUARANTEES WILL HIT THE BIG ICN-GALENIKA (U.S.-

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SERBIAN) JOINT VENTURE. PUBLICLY WE SHOULD USE CSCE
FORUMS, STARTING WITH THE PRAGUE MEETING OF SENIOR
OFFICIALS THIS WEEK, TO CRITICIZE MILOSEVIC DIRECTLY-
WE SHOULD NOISILY INVOKE STAGE TWO OF THE HUMAN
DIMENSION MECHANISM (HDM). ANYTHING WE SAY ON

-- WE SHOULD GALVANIZE THE EUROPEANS, WHO ARE
BEGINNING TO FLAG AGAIN, TO TAKE A MORE PUBLIC
PRO-MARKOVIC AND ANTI-MILOSEVIC LINE.
MARKOVIC IS COUNTING ON THE EC PRESIDENTS' VISIT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 04 OF 04 BELGRADE 06831

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LATER THIS MONTH. CAN WE SOMEHOW WARM UP DELORS'
FEET? WE SHOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE THE EUROPEANS
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TO JOIN US ON STAGE TWO OF THE HDM. WHILE SLAMMING
MILOSEVIC UNILATERALLY IN CSCE, I THINK WE AND THE
EUROPEANS SHOULD TAKE MARKOVIC'S ADVICE AND REFRAIN
FROM PRESSING ON CSCE MEDIATION UNLESS AND UNTIL
IT'S CLEAR THAT IT WILL DO MARKOVIC SOME GOOD. RIGHT
NOW HE SEES IT AS UNDERCUTTING HIS FRAGILE AUTHORITY.

-- LONGER TERM, WE SHOULD ENCOURAGE ALL EFFORTS TO
BUILD YUGOSLAVIA FROM THE BOTTOM UP. THE BOSNIAN
AND MACEDONIAN LEADERS HAVE SUCH AN INITIATIVE IN THE
WINGS. IT GETS AWAY FROM THE POLARITY BETWEEN THE
TERMS FEDERATION AND CONFEDERATION WHICH SIMPLY
ENFLAMES EMOTIONS. THE FACT IS THAT, IF YUGOSLAVIA
CAN BE PRESERVED (A DECLINING POSSIBILITY), IT CN
ONLY BE IN A LOOSE ARRANGEMENT WITH A FEW CLEARLY
DEFINED AND LIMITED FUNCTIONS ASSIGNED TO THE CENTRAL
GOVERNMENT.

9. THE TRAGEDY YUGOSLAVIA MAY BE HEADING FOR RESULTS
FROM A FAILURE OF POLITICS. EXCEPT FOR MARKOVIC AND
A HANDFUL OF LESSER LIGHTS, THE POLITICIANS IN THIS
COUNTRY TEND TO BE NATIONALIST EXTREMISTS (TUDJMAN
IS IN THIS CATEGORY ALONG WITH MILOSEVIC), LACKEYS,
OR TRIMMERS. THERE IS A CRIPPLING ABSENCE OF BREADTH
OF VISION, SYMPATHY FOR OTHERS, AND STATESMANSHIP.
SOMEHOW I DOUBT THAT JOSEPHINE BAKER WAS THINKING
ABOUT YUGOSLAVIA - THOUGH SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN - WHEN
SHE UTTERED THOSE IMMORTAL WORDS: "I'M UP TO MY
ASS IN DWARFS."
ZIMMERMANN

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